

all respects, but there may also be particular points and objects as to which the mind of the maniac may be perfectly clear, consistent, and sound; as in the case of the holographic will made by a lunatic woman, whose hands, at her earnest entreaty, were untied for the purpose of permitting her to write. (*l*)

But this proteus disorder, in its milder forms, is not at all perceptible to a superficial observer, often escapes the notice of the most skilful, even after being apprised of the existence of the malady; and it frequently happens that it cannot be detected without an examination of some time, and repeated observations. Although in law this state of the mind is held to be a course or *habit*, not a mere act, but as having some continuance; yet it is considered as a distempered condition, occasioned by disorder or accident, from which the recovery of the patient is deemed possible and probable; and therefore he and his property are always disposed of with a view to a recovery. (*m*)

DOTAGE is that feebleness of the mental faculties which proceeds from old age. It is a diminution or decay of that intellectual power which was once possessed. It is the slow approach of death; of that irrevocable cessation, without hurt or disease, of all the functions which once belonged to the living animal. The external functions gradually cease; the senses waste away by degrees; and the mind is imperceptibly visited by decay. The inert and dull senses transmit the passing occurrences so imperfectly to the sensorium, that they leave none, or but a very transitory impression there. Hence long past transactions are often remembered with much more exactness than those which have taken place recently. In the *second* childhood, as in the *first*, all the *present* makes but a faint and fleeting impression upon the mind. Hence the judgment in both stages, is weak, and the conduct unsteady and frivolous. (*n*)

(*l*) *Cartwright v. Cartwright*, 1 Phill. 90.—(*m*) 1 Coll. Id. 33; *Beverley's case*, 4 Co. 124; *Donegal's case*, 2 Ves. 408; *Attorney General v. Parnter*, 3 Bro. Ch. Ca. 441; *Fitzgerald*, a lunatic, 2 Scho. & Lefr. 437; *Shelf. Lun.* 36.

(*n*) "The soul in all hath one intelligence;

Though too much moisture in an infant's brain,

And too much dryness in an old man's sense,

Cannot the prints of outward things retain :

Then doth the soul want work, and idle sit;

And this we childishness and dotage call.

Davies.

Or, as has been said, it is that decline of all the powers of the man, when

Nature, as it grows again towards earth

Is fashion'd for the journey, dull, and heavy.

Cowper.

Shakspeare's *As You Like It*, act 2, s. 7, and second part of *Henry 4th*, act 1, s. 2.